

Application No. 10/603,646  
Office Action Dated: October 13, 2005  
Response to Office Action Dated: December 16, 2005

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 were pending prior to filing this Response. Claims 1, 6, 8, 9 and 14 are amended herein. Claims 5 and 11 are canceled. Therefore, claims 1-4, 6-10 and 12-14 remain for consideration.

Claim 5 is objected to as allegedly being indefinite. Claim 5 is canceled herein, and therefore the objection to claim 5 is now moot.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Schergen et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,360,854). Claims 2-10 and 12-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Schergen et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,360,854) in view of Steingroever et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,384,313).

Claim 11 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim (claim 9), but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Independent claim 9 is amended herein to include the limitations of claim 11 directed to a pre-treatment station. It is therefore respectfully submitted that amended claim 9 is in allowable form. Moreover, claims 10 and 12-14 each ultimately depend from claim 9, and are therefore in allowable form for at least the reasons set forth for claim 9.

Method claim 1 is amended herein to correspond to amended apparatus claim 9. It is therefore respectfully submitted that amended claim 1 is also in allowable form. Moreover, claims 2-4 and 6-8 each ultimately depend from claim 1, and are therefore in allowable form for at least the reasons set forth for claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that amended claims 1-4, 6-10 and 12-14 are in condition for allowance. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early action to that effect is earnestly solicited.

DEC-16-05

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No fees or deficiencies in fees are believed to be owed. However, authorization is hereby given to charge our Deposit Account No. 13-0235 in the event any such fees are owed.

Respectfully submitted,

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